

“Desk Guide” for Nursing Home Levels of Care Determinations from MDS Data

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See also PowerPoint and Webcast.

8/18/06 revisions are edits and additions to this document only; no changes have been made to the programmed logic itself.

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INTRODUCTION

This handout shows the decision algorithm that assigns nursing home level of care (LOC) based on assessment data in an individual's MDS (Minimum Data Set). This “MDS LOC Algorithm” has been programmed into software to be run on all full MDS assessments submitted to Wisconsin Medicaid (or EDS) for nursing home reimbursement.

Please note the following:

1. The Division of Health Care Financing and nursing home industry representatives have decided not to use the MDS LOC algorithm for reimbursement. Instead, beginning July 1, 2006, payment is gradually shifting to a RUGS-based payment system.
2. The MDS LOC algorithm is explained here at users' request, but it must be noted that this Desk Guide is incomplete: Some sections of the LOC algorithm are too complex to show here, so this Desk Guide may indicate lower LOC than the programmed algorithm. Therefore, you should never reject a potential admission based on this Desk Guide alone; consult with a State nurse consultant instead.
3. The LOC algorithm was developed to reflect—not replace—expert nursing judgment in determining LOC. Nursing home staff should continue to employ such judgment. Inappropriate LOC results will almost always be the result of the MDS being completed inaccurately. For accurate LOC results, focus on accurate completion of the MDS.
4. If the programmed MDS LOC algorithm ever fails to match facility nursing staff judgment, contact the designated State nurse reviewer. The State nurse will review the MDS with the facility nurse and ask them to describe the resident's condition. By referring to the programmed logic (not this document) the State nurse will, in most cases, pinpoint MDS items that could be changed to more accurately reflect the resident's condition, which will in turn result in a more accurate LOC.

STRUCTURE OF THE MDS LOC ALGORITHM

There are 2 general and 4 specific results of the MDS LOC decision algorithm:

1. “Eligible for Medicaid coverage of nursing home services”

i.e., Meets a specific level of care:

ISN—Intensive skilled nursing

SNF—Skilled nursing facility

ICF1—Intermediate care facility level 1

ICF2—Intermediate care facility level 2

Or

2. “Ineligible for Medicaid coverage of nursing home services”

No level

If the individual does not meet any of the above specific levels of care, then the individual gets a “No LOC” and is not clinically eligible for WI Medicaid payments for nursing home.

Only the 2 general results—eligible or ineligible/“No Level” for Medicaid nursing home coverage—will be used. The four specific Levels of Care (noted in item 1 above) will not be used for reimbursement and will not be reported back to facilities.

Beginning July 1, 2006, Wisconsin is incrementally transitioning to an acuity-based payment system (using the Residential Utilization Groupings, RUGs). During this transition period, the specific LOC assigned to each Medicaid resident receiving services up to June 30, 2006 will be “frozen”—i.e., extended. More information can be obtained from EDS or the Division of Health Care Financing.

Even though the specific LOC results will not be used, the entire algorithm yielding them is explained in what follows. This will demonstrate the clinical factors and logic of the MDS LOC algorithm. Remember, some sections of the LOC algorithm are too complex to show here, so this Desk Guide may indicate lower LOC than the programmed algorithm.

Part A lists the weighted categories or “Groups” to which various MDS item answers have been assigned. (Particular MDS answers are not listed, but references are precise enough for MDS users to make the matches.)

Part B lists the algorithms, from simplest to most complex. Each algorithm references the Groups listed in Part A.

Some sections of the algorithm are too complicated to translate from the database into English. They are essentially more detailed and combinative derivatives of the algorithms shown; they only help more people meet higher levels of care and in no case reduce any LOC results. Thus, it is acceptable that they not be detailed here, and they will not be needed in appeals.

PART A – WEIGHTED CATEGORIES (GROUPS)

Group A – ISN

Suctioning
Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN)
Tracheostomy care
Tube feedings
Ventilator

Group B—Skilled Nursing (SNF)

Burns (second or third degree)	Physician Orders changes (on 8 of past 14 days)
Chair prevents rising	Physician Visits (on 6 of past 14 days)
Comatose	Resident experiencing acute episode/flare-up
Conditions/diseases lead to instability	Surgical wounds
Deterioration in Cognitive Status	Transfusions
Dialysis	Traumatic brain injury
End-stage disease (≤ 6 months to live)	Trunk restraint
Hospice care	Ulcer(s): Stage 3
Injections (on 4 of past 7 days)	Ulcer(s): Stage 4
IV medication	Ulcers: Stage 2 (3 or more ulcers)
Limb restraint	Wound infection

Group C - Immobility

Oral feeding by syringe
Lifted mechanically
Lifted manually
Eating= Extensive or complete dependence
Bed mobility= Extensive or complete dependence

Group D --Status

Alzheimer's/dementia special care unit	Open lesions other than ulcers, rashes, cuts
Enemas/irrigation	Oxygen therapy
External (condom) catheter	Pain-Severe pain in past week
Indwelling catheter	Passive range of motion 3 to 7 of past 7 days
Injections 1 to 3 of past 7 days	Respiratory therapy 2 to 7 of past 7 days
Intake/output	Training in community skills
Intermittent catheter	Ulcers: Stage 1 (4 or more ulcers)
Monitoring acute medical condition	Ulcers: Stage 2 (1 or 2 ulcers)

Group E --Status

Fecal impaction
Physician Orders (on 3 to 7 of past 14 days)
Physician Visits (on 3 to 5 of past 14 days)
Recurrent lung aspirations in last 90 days
Septicemia
Swallowing problem
Toilet/commode/urinal—Did not use in past week

Group F --Status

Active range of motion 6 or 7 days in past week	Incontinent bladder 2 or more times in past week
Antipsychotic received on 5 to 7 of past 7 days	Incontinent bowel 2 or more times in past week
Cancer	Pain—Moderate pain in past week
Chemotherapy	Pneumonia
Fell in past 30 days	Radiation
Hip fracture in last 180 days	Unable to balance self while sitting
Other fracture in last 180 days	

Group G --Behaviors

Physically abusive behavior: at least 1 once in past week
Resists Care: 4+ days in past week
Socially inappropriate/disruptive behavior 4+ days in past week
Verbally abusive behavior 4+ days in past week
Wandering—at least 1 once in past week

Group H --Behaviors

Verbally abusive behavior 1-3 days in past week
Socially inappropriate/disruptive behavior 1-3 days in past week
Resisted care 1-3 days in past week

Group I -- Functioning

Any scheduled toileting plan
Balance while sitting = partial assist needed
Bed mobility did not occur in past week
Bladder retraining program
Eating = Limited assistance
Locomotion on unit = Extensive or complete dependence
Toilet use= Extensive or complete dependence
Transfer= Extensive or complete dependence

Group J --Therapies

Occupational therapy: 5+ days/past week
Physical therapy: 5+ days/past week
Speech therapy: 5+ days/past week

Group K--Therapies

Occupational therapy: 2 to 4 days in past week

Physical therapy: 2 to 4 days in past week

Speech therapy: 2 to 4 days in past week

Group L --Therapies

Speech therapy: 1 day in past week

Physical therapy: 1 day in past week

Occupational therapy: 1 day in past week

Group M -- Mentation

Cognitive Skills/Daily Decision Making = Moderate or severe impairment

Delusions

Episodes of disorganized speech

Hallucinations

Periods of altered perception/awareness

Unable to recall anything

Unable to recall current season

Unable to recall that he/she in nursing home

Group N -- Mentation

Alzheimer's disease

Cognitive Skills/Daily Decision Making = some difficulty in new situations only

Dementia other than Alzheimer's

Mental function varies during day

Repetitive questions at least 6 days/week

Repetitive verbalizations at least 6 days/week

Unable to recall location of own room

Unable to recall staff names/faces

Group O (Communication)

Communication: Aphasic, no speech

Communication: Is rarely or never understood by others

Communication: Understands others rarely or not at all

Communication: Uses American sign language language/Braille

Communication: Uses Communication board

Communication: Uses Signs/gestures/sounds

Communication: Writes messages

Group P (Communication)

Blind or severely impaired vision

Communication: Speech is unclear

Communication: Alternative mode of Expression (other than speech, writing, sign language, communication board, or gestures/sounds)

Communication: Is understood by others only sometimes

Group R (Functioning)

Balance while sitting: Unsteady but no physical help required
Balance while standing: unsteady or requires assistance
Bed mobility: Requires supervision or partial assistance
Dressing: Requires extensive assistance
Eating: Self-Performance
Locomotion on unit: Requires supervision or partial assistance
Personal hygiene: Requires extensive assistance, or not done in past week
Toilet use: Requires supervision or partial assistance
Transfer: Requires supervision or partial assistance

Group S (Status)

Emergency Room (ER) Visits: 1 to 7 in last 90 days
Fell in past 31-180 days
Fever
Hospital Stays—1 to 7 in last 90 days
Inability to lie flat—shortness of breath
Infection of foot—e.g., cellulitis
Internal bleeding
Manic depressive (bipolar disease)
Nursing Rehab: Range of motion (active) 3-5 days
Ostomy present
Over 80 years old
Pain: Mild pain daily or less, or moderate pain less than daily
Physician Orders: Changes on 3 to 7 of past 14 days
Physician Visits on 3 to 7 of past 14 days
Respiratory therapy: 1 or 2 days
Schizophrenia
Shortness of breath on 3 to 7 of past 14 days
Skin desensitized to pain or pressure
Syncope (fainting)
Tuberculosis
Ulcers: Stage 1 (1 to 3 ulcers)
Uses walker, cane or crutch
Vomiting
Weight gain/loss of 3 lbs in one week

Group T

Crying/tearfulness almost daily
Does not establish own goals
Does not self-initiate activities
Repetitive physical movements (e.g., fidgeting, picking, pacing)

PART B – THE LOC ALGORITHMS

Arranged from simplest to more complex. Flow is from top to bottom.

Do not attempt to calculate LOC “manually” from this document; see Introduction.

Intensive Skilled Nursing (ISN) LOC

ISN if A or B or C is met:

- A. ISN if **ANY ONE** of the following (1 through 3) are true:
 - 1. At least one item in Group A
 - 2. At least 6 items in Group B
 - 3. Resident is diagnosed with diabetes, **and** is receiving daily injections, **and** has at least one of the following:
 - a. Dialysis, wound infection, foot infection (e.g., cellulitis), Stage 3 or Stage 4 ulcer, burn(s), or other open lesions.
- B. ISN if **ALL** of the following (1 through 3) are true:
 - 1. At least 6 items in Groups B and D combined
 - 2. One item in Group C or E, OR 2 items in Group I or 2 in Group F
 - 3. At least 10 items in Group S OR at least 6 total from Groups G, J, M, N, H, K, L, and O combined
- C. ISN if **ALL** of the following (1 through 4) are true:
 - 1. At least 4 items in Group B OR at least 6 items in Group D
 - 2. At least 4 items in either Group E or F
 - 3. At least one item in Group C OR at least 4 items in either Group I or R
 - 4. At least 9 items total in Groups G, J, M, N, H, K, L, and O combined

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) LOC

SNF if none of the above ISN criteria are met and A or B or C is met:

- A. SNF if **ANY ONE** of the following (1 through 10) are true:
 - 1. At least one item in Group B or Group G or Group J
 - 2. At least 2 items in Group K
 - 3. At least 3 items in Group M
 - 4. At least 4 from one Group: Group C or Group D or Group E or Group L
 - 5. At least 9 items in Group S
 - 6. At least 5 total from Groups J, K, and L combined
 - 7. At least 7 total from Groups C, D, E, F, H, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, and R combined
 - 8. At least 14 “ICF1 and ICF2” results (see below)
 - 9. At least 4 total from Groups D, E, F combined
 - 10. At least 5 total from Groups C, D, E, and F combined

B. SNF if **ALL** of the following (1 through 3) are true:

1. At least 3 items in Group R OR one items in Group C or Q
2. At least 3 items in Group F OR one items in Group D or E
3. At least 3 items in Group T OR one items in Group M,N,O,P,H,K, or L

C. SNF if **ALL** of the following (1 through 4) are true:

1. At least 4 items in Group B OR at least 6 items in Group D
2. At least 4 items in Group E OR at least 4 items in Group F
3. At least 4 items in Group R OR at least 4 items in Group I OR one items in Group C
4. At least 9 from Groups G, H, J, K, L, M, N, O

Intermediate Care Facility -1 (ICF1) LOC

ICF if none of the above ISN or SNF criteria are met and:

ICF if **ANY ONE** of the following (1 through 5) is true:

1. At least one from Groups C, D, E, K, or M
2. At least two from one Group: Groups H or L, or N
3. At least three from one Group F or three from Group T
4. At least 6 items in Group S
5. At least 6 from Groups F, H, L, O, P, and S combined

Intermediate Care Facility-2 (ICF2) LOC

ICF 2 if none of the above criteria for ISN, SNF, or ICF1 are met and

ICF 2 if **ANY ONE** of the following (1 through 5) is true:

1. At least one from Groups F, H, L, N, O, P or T
2. At least two items in Group Q
3. At least three items in Group R
4. At least five items in Group S
5. Two items in Group S AND at least 1 from **both** Groups I and R

Pairs Yielding ICF1 or ICF2

If none of the above applies, and assessment indicates one item from each of the Groups listed in the following “**ICF Pairs Matrix**,” the level of care may be ICF1 or ICF2. Results (ICF1 or ICF2 or neither) are indicated at the row-column intersection of the two Groups. So, e.g., if an individual has none of the items shown above to yield ISN or SNF or ICF level of care, but she has one item from Group H and one item from Group L, the resultant level of care is ICF2. One item from Group H and one item from Group K would yield a level of care of ICF1. (ICF2 is highlighted to assist with use of the matrix.)

ICF Pairs Matrix

Group	D	E	F	H	I	K	L	T	O	P	R
M	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1
N	ICF1	ICF1	ICF2	ICF2	ICF1	ICF1	ICF2	ICF2	ICF1	ICF1	ICF2
D		ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1
E			ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1
F				ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF2	ICF1	ICF2	ICF2
H					ICF1	ICF1	ICF2	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1	ICF2
I						ICF1	ICF1	ICF2	ICF1	ICF2	--
K							ICF2	ICF2	ICF1	ICF1	ICF1
L								ICF2	ICF2	ICF2	ICF2
T									ICF2	ICF2	ICF2
O										ICF2	ICF2
P											-
R											

No Level of Care

Individuals not meeting any of the above criteria will fail to make a nursing home level of care. Such individuals may need help with at most one “activity of daily living” not including eating—that is, bathing, dressing, toileting, mobility, or transfers. (E.g., they may use a cane or wheelchair but be independent in all other activities of daily living.)

They have no recent falls or acute illnesses, instabilities, or symptoms; no communication impairments; and no cognitive impairments, behavioral challenges, or emotional disorders affecting thinking, decision-making, or self-direction (expressing preferences and performing goal-oriented activities). They may or may not need help with their medications; but without any of the above-listed impairments, weekly or bi-weekly med set-up should be sufficient and does not constitute nursing home level of care.

Referencing the above Groups and algorithms, individuals will receive a no level of care if they have:

No items from Groups A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H, J,K,L,M, N, O, P, S, or T and

No more than one item in Group I or Group R